

# Deployable Port Operations Center Provides Total Asset Visibility for SDDC in Kuwait

Stephen Larsen

A black and white photograph of a large U.S. military transport ship, likely a T-ESD, docked at a port. The ship's hull is light-colored with dark window openings. A large crane is visible on the left side of the ship. In the foreground, a white truck with a flatbed trailer is parked on the pier. The trailer is loaded with several large, cylindrical objects, possibly fuel tanks or equipment. A person in a white uniform is standing on the pier near the ship's stern. The scene is set in a port area with various structures and equipment visible.

**F**rom December 2002 to the present, in support of *Operations Enduring Freedom* and *Iraqi Freedom*, the U.S. Surface Deployment and Distribution Command (SDDC) has shipped more cargo for the American military than at any time in the past half century.

During that period, the SDDC moved more than 70,000 containers. That's enough materiel — from Bradleys to bullets — to fill more than 1,000 football fields. Laid end to end, the containers would stretch from New York City past Fredericksburg, VA.

Most of that materiel has come into Southwest Asia (SWA) through Ash Shuaiba, a port south of Kuwait City. "We've moved the materiel of eight Army divisions in support of these operations," said COL Tom Harvey, SDDC SWA Commander, who manages the Ash Shuaiba port and accounts for all the military cargo and supplies transiting the port. "Our port operations run 24 hours a day, 7 days a week."

### Rock of the Marne Returns to SWA

Currently, there is a constant flurry of activity across the port as cranes and forklifts offload huge ships transporting the Fort Stewart, GA, 3rd Infantry Division's (3ID's) materiel into theater, as the 3ID deploys back into theater after leading the drive to Baghdad and being the

first coalition unit to reach Iraq's capital during the 2003 ground offensive.

Helping SDDC SWA keep track of all that materiel is the Deployable Port Operations Center (DPOC), a suite of information technology (IT) systems contained in an 8- by 20-foot shelter, with satellite connectivity provided via a 2.4-meter Flyaway Triband Satellite Terminal (FTSAT). The DPOC is fielded by the Product Manager Defense Wide Transmission Systems (PM DWTS), part of the Fort Monmouth, NJ-based Project Manager Defense Communications and Army Transmission Systems.

"The DPOC is just what the name suggests," remarked LTC Earl Noble, PM DWTS, as he made a customer service visit to the SDDC staff at Ash Shuaiba. "It's basically a deployable office, providing SDDC personnel with Nonsecure

Internet Protocol Router Network (NIPRNET), Secret Internet Protocol Router Network (SIPRNET), video teleconferencing (VTC), fax and the same IT capabilities they have at their home stations."

In addition to the DPOC at Ash Shuaiba, PM DWTS also has DPOCs in the Netherlands and in Corpus Christi, TX. ... PM DWTS has MPOCs in Savannah, GA, Fort Monmouth and Ash Shuaiba.

These IT capabilities include the Worldwide Port System (WPS), through which the SDDC tracks all common-user surface shipments; the Global Transportation Network, which is the DOD system of record for in-transit visibility; and the Integrated Computerized Deployment System, which, based on information provided by WPS, provides automated stow plans for vessels. To-

gether, these capabilities add up to in-transit visibility and total asset visibility throughout the logistics pipeline.

### A Worldwide Network

Corrina Panduri, PM DWTS' project leader for SDDC programs at Fort



Port of Ash Shuaiba, Kuwait. LTC Earl Noble (right), PM DWTS, conducts a customer service visit with Cheryl Trobaugh (center) and SGT Anthony Tolbert, SDDC SWA. To the right is the FTSAT used by DPOC, which provides SDDC SWA the same IT capabilities they have at their home stations. To the left is a Humvee housing the MPOC. (U.S. Army photo by Stephen Larsen.)





Helicopters lined up at the port of Ash Shuaiba await transit to troops in Iraq. (U.S. Army photo by Stephen Larsen.)

Monmouth, said her task is to provide engineering, procurement, integration, testing and fielding products and services to support SDDC's mission of being the U.S. military's single port manager at worldwide locations.

"Because SDDC has such a real-time mission — for instance, SDDC's 599th Transportation Group was recently designated by the U.S. Pacific Command as the single port manager to offload critical supplies supporting tsunami relief efforts in Thailand — my challenge is to try to stay on top of requirements that can evolve on a daily basis," Panduri explained.

One way Panduri does this, she said, is by managing a worldwide DPOC program so she can quickly react to changing requirements. In addition to the DPOC

at Ash Shuaiba, PM DWTS also has DPOCs in the Netherlands and in Corpus Christi, TX. To support smaller-scale, shorter-duration port operations, PM DWTS has provided a

lean-and-mean version of the DPOC integrated into vehicles called the Mobile Port Operation Center (MPOC). PM DWTS has MPOCs in Savannah, GA, Fort Monmouth and Ash Shuaiba. Plus, to provide "eyes and ears" on the ground and someone the customers can "reach out and touch" for quick service, PM DWTS' liaison officer, Paul Schillreff, is stationed in Kuwait.

SGT Anthony Tolbert, a reservist serving with SDDC SWA, demon-

strated the MPOC at Ash Shuaiba, neatly integrated in shelters on the rear of two Humvees. "The MPOC in-

cludes a 10-kilowatt generator/environmental control unit, an attachable framed tent and a very small aperture terminal for satellite connectivity," described Tolbert. "Whenever we need it, we pull these out, and we can run a port right from these two vehicles."

The SDDC SWA personnel at Ash Shuaiba rate the capabilities provided to them by the DPOC and MPOC very high. "It's our lifeline," remarked Cheryl Trobaugh, SDDC SWA Operations. "It gives a 24-hour communications capability to us. We couldn't do our mission without it," she concluded.

**STEPHEN LARSEN** is the Public Affairs Officer for the Project Manager Defense Communications and Army Transmission Systems at Fort Monmouth, NJ. He has more than 20 years' experience writing about Army systems. Larsen has a B.A. in American studies from the College of Staten Island of the City University of New York.

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